

 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date:	May 6, 2013
	Agenda Item No.	50
	Roll Call No.	[_____]
	Communication No.	<u>13-217</u>
	Submitted by:	Benjamin R. Page, Park and Recreation Director

AGENDA HEADING:

Approve the naming of the enclosed shelter house at Birdland Park, 2100 Saylor Road, the Jay N. “Ding” Darling Shelter House.

SYNOPSIS:

Approving a recommendation from the Park and Recreation Board on the naming of the enclosed shelter house at Birdland Park the Jay N. “Ding” Darling Shelter House.

FISCAL IMPACT: NONE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

At the March 25, 2013 City Council meeting, Councilperson Mahaffey asked the Council to receive, file, and refer to the City Manager his request to consider naming the shelter house in Birdland Park for Jay N. "Ding" Darling; per Roll Call No. 13-086 Council referred the matter to the City Manager as requested. As it was desirable to proceed with consideration of the naming as soon as possible so that the shelter can be named and dedicated when it reopens in June following renovation now in progress, at its March 26, 2013 meeting, the Park and Recreation Board received and filed staff findings regarding the proposed naming and approved setting date of hearing for the board’s April meeting. At its April 23, 2013 regularly scheduled meeting, the Park and Recreation Board voted unanimously to recommend to City Council that it approve the designation of the enclosed shelter house at Birdland Park as the Jay N. “Ding” Darling Shelter House.

The historic enclosed shelter house at Birdland Park is currently undergoing renovations that will update it to serve the community for many years to come. Originally constructed by the Works Progress Administration in the late 1930s as a skating shelter on Birdland Lagoon, the facility is the most highly-rented shelter in the park and open space system.

Ding Darling was a renowned, two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist at the Des Moines Register, who advocated conservation of our nation’s natural resources. Father of the Federal Duck Stamp Program, founder of the National Wildlife Federation, and creator of the Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit Program, Ding Darling laid the groundwork for the system of today’s National Wildlife Refuges. Additionally, Ding and his family donated a portion of what is now Prospect Park, which is located on the south side of the Des Moines River, to the City and served on the Des Moines Park and Recreation Board in the 1930s.

In honor and recognition of his work, much of the greenway from downtown Des Moines to Saylorville Dam has been named after Ding Darling. Birdland Park and the shelter house sit about midway through this greenway and would be a great location to celebrate Ding's work and passion for natural resources and to educate shelter users about him.

Park and Recreation staff agrees that naming the shelter house to honor the memory of Ding Darling complies with the criteria in the City's policy for naming of a park facility. Through informative signage about Ding in the facility, the honor would forever create an awareness of the lasting impact and benefits he brought about for the City of Des Moines, the State of Iowa, and the entire country.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: March 25, 2013

Roll Call Number: [13-0486](#)

Action: [From](#) Council Member Bob Mahaffey to speak regarding naming of Birdland Park Shelter House in honor of Jay N. "Ding" Darling. Moved by Mahaffey to refer to the City Manager and Park and Recreation Board to begin the renaming process. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: May 24, 1999

Roll Call Number: 99-1691

Action: Designation of approximately 7.6 miles of land along the Des Moines River (from Grand to NW 66th Avenue), as "Ding" Darling Greenway. ([Council Communication No. 99-250](#)) Moved by McPherson to adopt. Motion Carried 5-2.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Park and Recreation Board

Date: April 23, 2013

Resolution Number: 13-029

Action: Hold public hearing and approve a recommendation that City Council name the enclosed shelter house at Birdland Park, 2100 Saylor Road, the Jay N. "Ding" Darling Shelter House.

Board: Park and Recreation Board

Date: March 26, 2013

Resolution Number: 13-023

Action: Receive and file staff findings and approve setting date of hearing on naming of the enclosed shelter house at Birdland Park, 2100 Saylor Road, the Jay N. "Ding" Darling Shelter House.

Board: Park and Recreation Board

Date: May 11, 1999

Resolution Number: 99-150

Action: Approve resolution to designate a 7.6 mile portion of the Des Moines River Greenbelt as the "Ding Darling Greenway."

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

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